

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

FOL RPT CAIRO 6305 ACTION SECSTATE 9 MAY QUOTE

S E C R E T CAIRO 6305

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR US EG LE

SUBJ: LEBANESE ELECTION

REF: STATE 112802

SUMMARY: FAHMY CHARGES REFERENCE MESSAGE DEVOID OF
SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT, ESPECIALLY RE
BROWN'S ACTIVITIES AND WHAT USG IS DOING. CLAIMS HE
CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO MAKE SUGGESTIONS WHEN HE DOES
NOT KNOW USG INTENTIONS RE LEBANON. WE SHOULD HAVE
FOLLOWED HIS ADVICE RE NEED FOR PACKAGE SETTLEMENT,
INCLUDING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS,
ETC., INSTEAD OF TAKING ONE AT A TIME. SARKIS ELECTION

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MEANS SYRIANS HAVE FOR ALL PRACTICAL

PURPOSES TAKEN OVER LEBANON. MOREOVER, NOTWITHSTANDING SYRIAN CRITICISM OF US, "EVERYONE" IN ME BELIEVES USG ENGINEERED THIS SYRIAN SUCCESS. RATHER THAN COMPROMISE, ASAD MAY NOW BE EXPECTED INVOLVE HIMSELF MORE IN LEBANON. NEXT SYRIAN STEP WILL BE AGAINST PLO, I.E., ARAFAT AND AL-FATH. SARKIS ELECTION WILL BRING PALESTINIANS AND JUMBLATT, WHO CONTROL MOST OF COUNTRY, TOGETHER STILL MORE. WHILE LEBANESE FIGHTING WAS HELPFUL TO EGYPT IN DIVERTING ATTENTION FROM SINAI II, GOE IS NOT POURING OIL ON BLAZE AND WILL NOT DO SO. IF USG SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN JOINT ARAB FORCE, GOE CAN REACTIVATE IT WITH ARAB LEADERS AT HIGHEST LEVEL, BUT WOULD HAVE TO HAVE AN ASSURANCE OF ACTIVE SUPPORT OF US AMBASSADORS IN LEBANON AND ARAB WORLD BEFORE DOING O. END SUMMARY

1. MET WITH FAHMY NOON TODAY TO GIVE HIM POINTS CONTAINED REFTEL AND TO ASK THAT THEY ALSO BE PASSED TO PRESIDENT SADAT AT BURG-AL-ARAB. FAHMY WENT THROUGH THE POINTS, BUT EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION. IT CONTAINED NOTHING, HE NOTED, ABOUT WHAT BROWN HAS BEEN DOING SINCE HIS RETURN TO LEBANON LAST WEEK OR ABOUT WHAT USG NOW INTENDS TO DO VIS-A-VIS LEBANON. IT IS CLEAR FROM THE LEBANESE PRESS THAT BROWN HAS BEEN ACTIVE PAST FEW DAYS. HOW COULD HE BE ASKED FOR COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS WHEN HE HAS NO IDEA WHAT WE ARE DOING IN LEBANON. I TOLD HIM OUR GENERAL POSITION WAS CLEARLY STATED IN THE MESSAGE, BUT HE INSISTED THE MESSAGE WAS DEVOID OF SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT.

2. IF WE HAD FOLLOWED HIS ADVICE, FAHMY CARPED, WE WOULD HAVE HAD A DIFFERENT SITUATION IN LEBANON. AS HE HAD FREQUENTLY TOLD US, THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION MUST BE PART OF A "PACKAGE" DEAL, INCLUDING SECURITY AND PEACEKEEPING ASPECTS. OF WHAT PRACTICAL USE IS THE ELECTION OF SARKIS? IT WAS NOTHING BUT A DIKTAT OF THE SYRIANS. THE DELEGATES WHO VOTED FOR SARKIS HAD BEEN TAKEN FROM THEIR HOMES TO THE MEETING PLACE IN SA'IQA ARMORED CARS. THEY HAD BEEN PRESSED BY SA'IQA TO ATTEND. FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, THEY HAD BEEN "KIDNAPPED" FOR THIS PURPOSE. WE NOW HAVE TWO PRESIDENTS IN

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LEBANON WITH NO GOVERNMENT AND NO SECURITY. BOTH PRESIDENTS ARE SYRIAN PUPPETS AND THE SYRIAN ARMY IS IN LEBANON. IN HIS VIEW, LEBANON HAS BECOME AN APPENDAGE OF SYRIA. THE VIEW EXPRESSED IN OUR MESSAGE (PARA 5, REFTEL) THAT THE SUREST WAY TO PREVENT THE DOMINATION OF LEBANON BY SYRIA IS THROUGH THE COOPERATION OF ALL LEBANESE FACTIONS IS A CONTRADICTION OF THE FACTS OF THE SITUATION IN POST-ELECTION LEBANON.

3. TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE , "EVERYONE" IN THE MIDDLE EAST BELIEVES -- RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY--- THAT USG ENGINEERED THE ELECTION OF SARKIS, DESPITE OUR CLAIMS THAT THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WAS SOMETHING SOLELY FOR THE LEBANESE TO DECIDE. CHAMOUN, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD NEVER HAVE GONE ALONG WITH SARKIS HAD HE NOT BELIEVED USG SUPPORTED SYRIAN CANDIDATE. SYRIAN CRITICISM OF USG IN NO WAY CHANGES THIS WIDE-SPREAD PUBLIC VIEW. AFTER THIS ELECTION, HOW CAN USG BELIEVE THAT THE SYRIANS WILL ACCEPT ANY COMPROMISE. ON THE CONTRARY, ASAD MAY NOW BE EXPECTED TO GO INTO LEBANON MORE AND MORE. FAHMY DISMISSED ANY SUGGESTION THAT ASAD IS SO BOGGED DOWN IN LEBANON THAT THE SARKIS ELECTION MAY OFFER A FACE-SAVING WAY OUT.

4. THE NEXT ROUND, FAHMY PREDICTED, WILL BE BETWEEN THE SYRIANS AND THE PLO, ESPECIALLY ARAFAT AND AL-FATAH. THE PALESTINIANS WILL BE FORCED TO COOPERATE 100 PERCENT WITH JUMBLATT. THE CIVIL CONFLICT IN LEBANON WILL INCREASINGLY BECOME A RELIGIOUS WAR.

5. AT ONE POINT FAHMY NOTED HE HAD TOLD THE PRESIDENT THAT THE LEBANESE CONFLICT WAS HELPFUL IN DIVERTING ATTENTION FOR THE "CRAZY" SINAI II AGREEMENT. SADAT HAD INITIALLY BEEN SHOCKED, BUT HAS NOW ALSO COME AROUND TO THIS VIEW. NOTWITHSTANDING THIS VIEW, FAHMY INSISTED THAT GOE IS NOT POURING OIL ON THE CONFLICT AND DOES NOT INTEND TO DO SO. OUTSIDE SUPPORT FOR ANTI-SARKIS FORCES IS HARDLY NECESSARY. THERE IS ENOUGH ANTI-SARKIS SENTIMENT WITHIN THE COUNTRY. EVEN THOUGH JUMBLATT HAS ONLY 12 PARLIAMENTARY SEATS, HE AND THE PALESTINIANS CONTROL ALMOST 80 PERCENT

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OF THE COUNTRY. HE EXPECTS THE TENSIONS TO GO ON UNLESS SOME ADEQUATE SECURITY FORCES CAN BE ESTABLISHED.

5. CHANGING HIS TUNE SOMEWHAT, FAHMY ASKED IF THE FINAL SENTENCE OF THE MESSAGE HAVING TO DO WITH A JOINT ARAB FORCE SHOULD BE CONSTRUED TO MEAN THAT THE USG IS NOW INTERESTED IN SUCH A FORCE. IF SO, HE WAS CONFIDENT IT COULD BE ACTIVATED. IT WOULD REQUIRE A MESSAGE FROM SADAT TO THE HEADS OF VARIOUS ARAB STATES AND THE ACTIVE SUPPORT OF US AMBASSADORS IN LEBANON AND THE ARAB STATES. A SARKIS INVITATION WOULD BE HELPFUL, BUT NOT ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. HOWEVER, HE DOES NOT WANT TO PUSH FOR IT UNLESS HE IS SURE USG WILL ACTIVELY SUPPORT IT.

6. DEPT MAY WISH PASS THIS MESSAGE TO BEIRUT.
EILTS
UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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